

Partners Outdoors 2014 Conference Notes

Partners from all over the Recreation Community came out to the Department of the Interior in Washington D.C. to attend 3 days of discussion about how public and private entities can work better together to serve the public and share America's Great Outdoors with everyone across the nation.

The key 3 topics were:

- **Funding Recreation in the Great Outdoors Sustainably**
- **Hosting All Americans in their Great Outdoors**
- **Working Better As Partners Outdoors.**

Discussions featured public and private leaders such as National Park Service Director Jon Jarvis, American Recreation Coalition President Derrick Crandall, Author Audrey Peterman, Virginia State Parks Director Joe Elton, Corps of Engineers Chief of Operations Jim Hannon and Chief of Natural Resources Mary Coulombe, Georgia State Parks Director Becky Kelley and many more.

Monday- June 9

1. Keynote: John Jarvis, Director, National Park Service
 - a. Trend- waning interest in the outdoors. Need to promote/raise public awareness and connect people to parks
 - b. Key goal for NPS Centennial = relevancy. Need to bring parks to the people instead of past focus of bringing people to the parks.
 - c. Mobile technology and social media is key to connecting people to public lands
 - d. Need to tap into public health connection to the parks (ie. Partner with local Doctors to prescribe "Park Prescriptions" for their patients needing exercise)
 - e. Focus on inclusion and diversity
 - f. Looking at new financial models for sustainable programs "We are a perpetuity agency operating on an annual appropriation, and it's just not working."
2. General session: Assembling Needed Resources
 - a. Lewis Ledford, Executive Director, National Assn of State Park Directors
 - i. State park financing = user/entrance/permit fees, motor fuel tax, vehicle registration, lottery, real estate tax, license plates, petroleum leases, tobacco tax
 - ii. Need to share the role parks play in the economy, human health, and natural treasures
 - b. Destry Jarvis, President, Outdoor Recreation and Park Services, LLC
 - i. Revenue sources = FLREA, paid educational programs/guides, concessionaires, philanthropy (small role)
 - ii. Need cost efficiency such as conservation corps work
 - iii. Need interagency regional planning such as SCORP
 - c. Derrick Crandall, President, American Recreation Coalition
 - i. Shared example of Great Park Pursuit (similar to Amazing Race) in CT State parks
 - ii. Example of GA state park pass provided to every 5th grader
 - iii. Example of library check-outs and sales of state park passes
 - iv. Alternative funding sources will NOT reduce appropriations. If we create relevance with the public then the legislators will continue to fund plus the user will be paying their own way
 - v. Is your park relevant to our new users? Are you relevant to your new users?
3. General session: Bringing a Team Approach to Funding Recreation

- a. Jody Olsen, Director, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
 - i. Follow the \$ in your community. See where corporations are spending and donating.
 - ii. Reach out to non-tradition funders
 - iii. Focus on outcomes- Define how outcomes meet the goals of your partners
 - iv. Leverage your funding
 - v. Develop relationships with funders
 - b. Dan Puskar, Executive Director, Assn of Partners for Public Lands
 - i. Youth: To Play outdoors is to Learn outdoors. Create an experience for your young visitors
 - c. Mary Ellen Sprenkel, President, The Corps Network
 - i. Succession Planning – 38% of NPS is ready to retire
 - ii. Utilize Job Corps type programs to grow your leaders
 - d. Steve Richer, Public Affairs Advocate, National Tour Assn
 - i. Ways to get the word out: health driven organizations, user group such as scouts, clubs, church groups, college Greek system
 - ii. Need to talk to marketers and participate in forums such as the Governors conference on tourism to include public lands in the discussion and advocate our message
 - iii. Communicate the bottom line- jobs created, sales in the community
 - iv. Meet with CVB and share your opportunities
 - v. Meet with State travel directors
 - vi. Important to make processes easier- multi-year/umbrella agreements
 - vii. Breakdown stovepipes across business lines
4. Brainstorming Sessions- Action items/big ideas
- a. Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act
 - b. Conservation Corps
 - i. Agency leaders/managers need to sell conservation corps program to peers
 - ii. Incentive/reward programs to engage conservation corps
 - iii. Seek special funding opportunities such as settlement, recovery, mitigation funds
 - iv. Support legislation to give preference for working with conservation corps
 - v. Need change in gov't legal culture to allow recognition of private partners
 - c. Private Partners
 - d. Urban Parks is where innovation is happening
5. Beacon Award Presentations
- a. DOI Digital Strategy Team: social media platform development (FB, Twitter, YouTube, Tumblr, This Week at Interior)
 - b. USFS: Yonder free mobile app to share outdoor activities, community driven sharing
 - c. USFS: Shawnee Forest virtual tours
 - d. NPS: Law enforcement real time mapping
 - e. NPS- Delaware Water Gap/Pocono Mtn Visitors Bureau #Takeonpocono photo contest
 - f. BLM: Salmon podcast trail developed by local high school students and partnership with library to rent out iPods
 - g. FWS: NCTC integrating technology into training, video, TV, distance learning

Tuesday- June 10

- 1. Keynote: Hosting all Americans in their Great Outdoors

2. General session: Understanding Barriers to Outdoors Fun for Some Americans
 - a. Joe Elton, Deputy Director, VA Dept of Conservation and Recreation
 - i. VA State Parks are relevant because they are safe and comfortable
 - ii. Partnering: Common ground does not move toward us; we move toward it" VA Gov. McAlliff
 - iii. VA State Parks fully utilize and have great success using Job Corps employees (Youth Corps, AmeriCorps, SCA, etc)
 - b. Support Carlos Alcazar, Founder, Culture ONE World
 - i. In April 2014, Latinos became the majority ethnic in California
 - ii. From 2010-2050, US population growth will consist of 1% white, 5-6% black, 142% Asian, and 167%
 - iii. In 2014, 40% of population age 16-34 are non-white
 - iv. Hispanic trends in the outdoors: love to camp in groups, with church, do not like 'roughing it'. Hispanics like to picnic – it combines family and cooking
 - v. Successful marketing campaigns: getthegreen.org contest; Rhett & Link "Textpert" rap video
 - vi. Key point: Adapt your program to your user and ask... is the experience relevant to them?
 - vii. Key point: Hire staff that reflects the community you want to attract and serve
 - viii. Key point: Communicate in a culturally competent way
3. General session: Bringing Diverse Populations to the Great Outdoors
 - a. Angelou Ezeilo
 - i. Need to customize experience to the audience, meet their cultural needs, address their fears and perceptions
4. Legend Award Presentations
 - a. Corps award winner: Jude Harrington, Raystown Lake

Wednesday- June 11

1. Keynote: Rick Cables, VP Vail Resorts
 - a. Pushed for legislation to allow year round recreation opportunities at ski resorts on USFS lands- helps local economy with year round employment and tourism \$
 - b. Process wasn't easy or quick, but they were successful
 - c. Attitude- "We're married to the Forest Service, and divorce is NOT an option"
 - d. Needed to figure out where the 'flattening room' (where good ideas go to get squashed) was located within the agency and fight through it with intervention and tenacity
 - e. Worked with lawyers during implementation process so that regulations were more permissive than restrictive
 - f. Benefits: Help agency by providing brand recognition, outdoor/environmental education
 - g. Partnered with The Nature Conservancy to donate 1% of receipts for forest restoration
2. General session: Partners in Stewardship Through Volunteers and 21st Century CSC (Success stories)
 - a. CA salmon restoration project with veterans corps, hired through CA Conservation Corps
 - b. West VA historic horse stable restoration with WV Conservation Corps, the National Trust, and funding from Delaware North concessionaire
 - c. Historic stadium rehabilitation with HOPE (Hands On Preservation Experience)

- d. Veterans fire corps (SW Conservation Corps/Veterans Green Jobs) in CO for wildland fire fighting. Partnership between USDA, DOI, conservation corps
 - e. Boy Scout Jamboree volunteer project- 40,000 scouts worked with WV Citizens Conservation Corps and National Civilian Community Corps- completed 352 service projects in 5 days through 744 scout troops, providing 319,000 hours of service
 - f. Mobilize Green- career pathway for diverse students that provides mentoring, coaching, individual intern placements
 - g. "Walking Off the War"- Warrior hiking program sponsored by the Appalachian Trail Conservancy
3. General session: Tools for Success as Partners
- a. Vickie Singer, Senior VP, Marketing and Communications, Destination Marketing Assn Int'l
 - i. Partnership opportunities with Destination Marketing Organizations (similar to CVB)
 - ii. Alignment with DMO
 - iii. Advocacy committees- Advocacy toolkit online (how to connect with destinations)
 - iv. Destination travel foundation
 - v. National convention
 - b. David Brown, Exec Director, America Outdoors Assn
 - i. Celebrate and recognize partners
 - ii. Waive fees for concessionaires and permittees for charitable trips
 - c. Becky Kelley, Director, GA State Parks and Historic Sites
 - i. 2010 mandate by state legislature to pursue self sufficiency in State Park system
 - ii. #1 focus was on internal partners (Staff and friends groups)
 - iii. Community engaged site business plans developed for all properties educated and energized local/partners/stakeholders
 - iv. Outcome: increased financial support, increased member base, doubled number of friends chapters, quadrupled volunteers
 - d. Overall Key Points:
 - i. Important to let people know where to go, what they can do when they get there, who can provide it, and how to get there
 - ii. Need to build relationships with groups, businesses, communities
 - iii. Understand each other's needs and capacities/define expectations
 - iv. Build on each agencies'/partners' strengths and work more together
 - v. Celebrate success!

Video footage from Partners Outdoors

Monday's first General Session, both General Sessions from Tuesday and Wednesday and Monday's Beacon Awards are all available for viewing at : <http://new.livestream.com/usinterior>. On the site, the videos are arranged newest to oldest. As such, VIDEO #1 refers to the oldest video. Topics, speakers and their times are listed below.

VIDEO #1 Monday: Funding Recreation in the Great Outdoors Sustainably

- Introductory Comments: ARC President Derrick Crandall (1:10 - 13:21)
- Keynote Address: National Park Service Director Jon Jarvis (13:33 - 55:30)

General Session #1: Assembling Needed Resources

- Branch Chief, Visitor Services, National Wildlife Refuge System, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Kevin Kilcullen (56:44 - 59:31)
- Executive Director, National Association of State Park Directors Lewis Ledford (59:55 - 1:15:24)
- President, Outdoor Recreation and Park Services, LLC Destry Jarvis (1:16:27 - 1:33:01)
- President, American Recreation Coalition Derrick Crandall (1:33:45 - 2:01:19)
- Panel Q&A (2:03:38 - 2:08:40)

VIDEO #2 Monday: Beacon Awards

- Introductory Comments: ARC President Derrick Crandall (2:38 - 8:59)
- Moderator Comments: Assistant Secretary of Commerce and Deputy Administrator, NOAA, The Honorable Mark Schaefer (9:08 - 14:45)

Awards Presented

- Secretary's Office of Digital Strategy, Department of the Interior (15:25 - 20:00)
- Yonder in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service (20:25 - 24:04)
- National Park Service's Law Enforcement Real-time Mapping project in the Mojave National Preserve (24:33 - 27:22)
- National Park Service's Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area and the Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau (27:30 - 32:13)
- Bureau of Land Management's Salmon Field Office (32:21 - 35:32)
- Forest Service's Interpretive Mobile Tour in the Shawnee National Forest (36:06 - 41:18)
- Fish and Wildlife's Knowledge Resources and Technologies Division of the National Conservation and Training Center (41:25 - 46:19)
- Closing Comments: Assistant Secretary of Commerce and Deputy Administrator, NOAA, The Honorable Mark Schaefer (46:20 - 48:00)
- Closing Comments: ARC President Derrick Crandall (48:01 - 49:14)

VIDEO #3 Tuesday: Hosting All Americans in Their Great Outdoors

- Introductory Comments & Audience Introductions: ARC President Derrick Crandall (8:15 - 50:55)
- Panel Introduction : ARC President Derrick Crandall (51:02 - 52:04)

General Session #1: Understanding Barriers to Outdoors Fun for Some Americans

- Chief, Division of Recreation and Visitor Services, Bureau of Land Management Andy Tenney (52:15 - 1:01:51)
- Director, Virginia State Parks; Deputy Director, Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation Joe Elton (1:01:58 - 1:30:33)
- Founder, Culture ONE World Carlos Alcazar (1:30:59 - 1:52:31)
- Panel Q&A (1:52:47 - 2:00:14)

General Session #2: Bringing a Diverse Population to the Great Outdoors

- Chief, Public Affairs, Office of the Commissioner, Bureau of Reclamation Dan DuBray (2:14:30 - 2:20:00)
- Founder, Greening Youth Foundation Angelou Ezeilo (2:37:52 - 2:37:13)

- Author, Legacy on the Land and Our True Nature Audrey Peterman (2:37:52 - 2:59:47)
- Field Office Supervisor, Chesapeake Bay Field Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Genevieve LaRouche (3:00:13 - 3:28:30)
- Panel Q&A (3:20:48-3:28:30)

Charge to the Brainstormers: Director, Office of Natural Landscape Conservation System and Community Programs, Bureau of Land Management Carl Rountree (3:32:43 – 3:40:03)

VIDEO #4 Wednesday: Working Better As Partners Outdoors

- Introductory Comments: Associate Chief, U.S. Forest Service Mary Wagner (9:50-18:16)
- Keynote Address: Vice President, Vail Resorts Inc. Rick Cables (18:30 – 45:08)

General Session #1: Partners in Stewardship Through Volunteers and 21st Century CSC

- Associate Chief, U.S. Forest Service Mary Wagner (49:21 – 52:07)
- President and CEO, The Corps Network Mary Ellen Sprenkel (52:10 – 1:12:56)
- Corpsmember, Conservation Legacy Durango, Colorado Steven Cooper (1:13:27 - 1:25:18)
- Vice President, The Corps Network Marie Walker & Program Officer-Operations, Disaster Services Unit, Corporation for National and Community Service Jennifer Prall Murphy (1:25:30 – 1:39:30)
- President & Co-Founder, MobilizeGreen Leah Allen (1:39:40 – 1:49:21)
- Information Services Manager, Appalachian Trail Conservancy Laurie Potteiger (1:49:24 – 2:00:35)
- Closing Remarks Mary Wagner & Mary Ellen Sprenkel (2:00:40 – 2:02:50)

General Session #2: Tools for Success as Partners

- Chief, Natural Resources Management, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mary Coulombe (2:21:05 – 2:25:27)
- Senior Vice President, Marketing and Communications, Destination Marketing Association International Vickie Singer (2:25:33 – 2:35:52)
- President & CEO, Student Conservation Association Dale Penny (2:26:04 – 2:50:24)
- Executive Director, America Outdoors Association David Brown (2:50:43 – 3:02:15)
- Director, Georgia State Parks and Historic Sites Becky Kelley (3:03:25 – 3:16:52)
- President, Management and Engineering Services Craig Erickson (3:16:36 – 3:25:13)
- Panel Q&A (3:25:21 – 3:37:50)

Charge to the Brainstormers: Chief of Operations, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Jim Hannon